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*John Hancock*  
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OF BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS



Samuel Adams  
demanding the  
removal of British  
Troops from Boston

**Samuel Adams**

Father of  
American Independence



"This meeting can do nothing more to save the country." At these words of Samuel Adams half a hundred "Indians" rushed to the tea-ships and dumped three hundred and forty-two chests of tea overboard. This was called "The Boston Tea Party."

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## SAMUEL ADAMS

### *Father of American Independence*

**I**N the long legislative struggle between the colonies and the British Parliament which culminated in the American Revolution, one man stands out as the guiding spirit: that man is Samuel Adams. For as Massachusetts led the thirteen colonies during those ten years from 1765 to 1775, so Boston led Massachusetts, and so Samuel Adams guided, directed, and led the town of Boston.

### EARLY LIFE

**B**ORN September 27, 1722, of a family which for four generations had lived in America, Samuel Adams was richly endowed with the love of liberty, the hardy spirit of independence, and the political wisdom which the young America, and New England in particular, fostered in her sons. For nowhere can we find so democratic a system of government as that which prevailed in the New England towns at that period.

The town meeting, to which every freeman came to have a hand in his own government, was the form of local government over all of New England; and Samuel Adams was the son of the town meeting. His father, Samuel Adams, Senior, was one of the most active citizens in the town meetings of Boston. In turning over the old Boston records (all of which are carefully preserved) one finds the father's name mentioned often, as Justice of the Peace, as Selectman, as a member of the important committee to instruct the delegates to the Assembly (the legislative body for the colony), and finally as a delegate to the Assembly.

Samuel Adams, Junior, was one of twelve children. His father was a well-to-do man who could afford to give Samuel the advantages of a Harvard education, so that after finishing the course at

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the Boston Latin School, Samuel attended Harvard, from which he received the degree of A.B. in 1740 at the age of eighteen. Three years later he became Master of Arts.

In the subject of the thesis which he wrote to obtain his master's degree it is particularly interesting to note that even at that early date he was thinking of principles which were to guide him in all his future political struggles. He read before the dignitaries of the college commencement, which included the Royal Governor and other officials of the King of England, a thesis entitled, "*Whether it be Lawful to resist the Supreme Magistrate, If the Commonwealth cannot otherwise be Preserved.*"

Because of his father's business failure, Samuel was obliged to give up the study for the ministry—the calling which his parents had selected for him—and to begin the study of law. He gave that up shortly, however, and turned to business, first in the counting house of Thomas Cushing, then in a business for himself (where he lost one thousand pounds that his father had advanced); and finally in a partnership with his father in a malt house. As business men both father and son were unsuccessful; they were too much wrapped up in the business of public welfare ever to show much profit in their own undertakings.

During the period of the partnership, Samuel's father sat in the Assembly and spent most of his energy in furthering the cause of the colonists in the French and Indian wars. The son, meantime, figured prominently in the political discussions of the times, writing much for the newspapers and speaking often in the political clubs of which he was a member. Even at that early date he had found his proper sphere and was training himself for a life of great public usefulness.

Samuel Adams, Senior, died in 1748, leaving to his son his house on Purchase Street and the malt-house business in material wealth, but a far greater spiritual heritage of political sagacity and deep-seated love of liberty.

### EARLY POLITICAL CAREER

IN 1749 Samuel Adams married Elizabeth Checkley, established himself in his Purchase Street house, and applied himself with more or less energy to the malt business. But he could not long keep out of public affairs. In 1753 his name first appears in the records of the town meetings as a member of the committee to visit schools; and from then on to the opening of the Revolution, his

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name appears constantly on the records in positions of ever increasing importance until we find him the guiding spirit of the Boston town meetings.

Because the story of Samuel Adams is so completely tied up with the struggle between the British Parliament and the colonies, an understanding of the government of the Massachusetts Bay Colony is necessary before we can see what Samuel Adams accomplished.

The colony as a whole was governed by a Governor and a Lieutenant Governor, who were appointed by the King of England. These officials were the executives of the colony, but they could do nothing without legislative authority; and that authority came from a body known as the Assembly. The colonists had nothing to do with the appointment of the Governor, but they had complete power in the election of the Assembly. Each town in the colony sent delegates, elected in open town meeting, to the Assembly. The voters, furthermore, gave their delegates the most explicit instructions as to how they should act on each measure that came up in the Assembly. Clearly such a system made for the greatest possible expression of the desires of the people.

The Governor had the power to summon, adjourn, or dissolve the Assembly, by the use of which power he could keep that body from doing anything he did not like. In the matter of money, however, the Assembly had power over the Governor; because it levied the taxes, spent the money of the colony, and even paid the Governor his salary. The King of England had the final say in everything; he could annul any act of the Assembly within three years of its passage; but the charter under which the colony was run did not mention the British Parliament. The colony had no representative in Parliament, and therefore did not feel that Parliament had any right to legislate for them; and herein lay the seed of contention which grew into the American Revolution.

Samuel Adams began his public career under the form of government which has just been outlined. He found a colony that was not entirely governed by the people, but a town system that was completely democratic, and it was through the town that he worked.

From 1756 to 1764 Samuel Adams was yearly elected one of the town tax collectors. During this period, in 1760, Francis Bernard became the Royal Governor. Almost at once the first clash came between Parliament and the colonies. England was very much in need of money at the end of the Seven Years War; and the Prime Minister, Grenville, began his attempts to tax the trade of the colonies—first by the *Sugar Act*, later by the *Stamp Act*.



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When, in 1764, the *Stamp Act* was being considered by Parliament, and the colonies were doing all they could to keep it from becoming a law, Samuel Adams had reached the age of forty-two. His first wife had died in 1757, leaving to him a son and a daughter. His business had failed completely, but he had become an important public figure. No town meeting was complete without him. It was only natural, then, that he should be appointed to the committee which gave the instructions, as to the *Stamp Act*, to the Boston representatives in the Assembly. In those instructions, which Samuel Adams wrote, he gave the first expression in a public document to the theory that, "If taxes are laid upon us in any shape without our having a legal representation where they are laid, are we not reduced from the Character of Free Subjects to the miserable state of Tributary Slaves?"

These instructions from the pen of Samuel Adams appeared a year before Patrick Henry's famous *Virginia Resolutions*, which included the striking phrase, better known than the one quoted above but clearly the same idea, that, "Taxation without representation is tyranny!"

In the same instructions of 1764, Adams was the first person to suggest two other very important steps: first, that the colonies should unite for the purpose of securing their rights from the mother country; and second, that they should all agree not to import goods from England until the British Parliament should agree to let the colonies alone. All of these suggestions came first from Samuel Adams; and they were all so important in the steps which led to independence that he was clearly the leader even at that early date.

## THE STAMP ACT

IN 1765, in spite of the heroic attempts of Adams and others to stop it, the *Stamp Act* went into effect. The colonists received it with riots and the expressions of determination not to use a single stamp. The same year Adams was elected by the town meeting of Boston to be one of its representatives in the Assembly; and he entered the Old State House, where, for the next thirty-three years, his public work kept him almost without a break.

Upon entering the Assembly, Adams was at once given a place of great importance. He was called upon to write the resolves against the *Stamp Act*. In them he expressed again the principle that Parliament had no power over the colonies, that their own

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Assembly and the King were the only authorities that they recognized, and that they would not help to enforce the *Stamp Act*.

The same principles which Adams expressed in these resolves were soon afterwards adopted by the Stamp Act Congress in New York, to which nine of the colonies had sent representatives. That congress was the first attempt at uniting the colonies.

The determined stand taken by the colonies against the *Stamp Act* caused its repeal in a few months. But with the repeal of the *Stamp Act* came the *Declaratory Act*, in which Parliament stated that the colonies were subject to Parliament in all matters, taxation included; and a small tax was laid on a few articles, including tea, to show that the power to tax was not given up by the mere repeal of the *Stamp Act*.

Adams saw at once that the real trouble was not over, but merely delayed by the repeal of the *Stamp Act*. The people in general, however, noticed only the repeal; and when the news came on May 16, 1766, it was a signal for great rejoicing. Salutes were fired, fireworks were displayed on the common, and the leading citizens entertained the people. John Hancock, who had lately joined forces with Adams and those who were fighting the *Stamp Act*, opened his mansion, which faced the Common, and served high and low alike.

A few days after this celebration, the town meeting of Boston was called for the purpose of electing its representatives to the Assembly. Adams of course was reelected, as were Thomas Cushing and James Otis. In addition to these, John Hancock was sent for the first time to the Assembly. There can be no doubt that Adams had much to do with the election of Hancock. Samuel Adams, the wise and capable politician, was constantly watching the young and promising citizens, so that he might enlist them in the cause of the colonists.

Of his many services to America, none were more productive to the cause he advocated than this very service. First he took John Adams, his second cousin, and started him on a career which brought him to the highest honor within the power of the United States of America to give. John Hancock he likewise watched over in those early days until Hancock had distinguished himself as the President of the Second and Third Continental Congress, as the first signer of the *Declaration of Independence*, and finally as the first Governor of the State of Massachusetts. And so he had sponsored Joseph Warren in his short but brilliant career in the cause of liberty which ended in a hero's death at Bunker Hill. Samuel Adams counseled



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them, helped them to positions of importance and trust, often even placed them in positions of honor which he himself might have had, and held them firmly to the cause that he held nearest and dearest—American Independence.

For even as early as this, ten years before the *Declaration of Independence*, Samuel Adams seems to have seen with a prophetic eye that nothing but complete freedom from England could settle the struggle with Parliament. While others, including Benjamin Franklin and James Otis, were advocating representation in Parliament as the one possible solution, Samuel Adams fought anything that tended to bring the colonies and the Mother Country together. Although it was not until 1773 that he openly urged independence, his every political move from 1766 points to that one fixed purpose: freedom from England.

In the session of the Assembly which followed Hancock's election, Samuel Adams was made clerk of the Assembly, a position which paid about one hundred pounds a year. As he had completely given up business, and as members of the Assembly were not paid, Adams needed such an income to support his family. He had married again in 1764. His second wife, Elizabeth Wells, was a thrifty and capable woman, and by means of the strictest economy she was able to run the household and raise the two children with the little that Adams received from the clerkship.

In his new position, Samuel Adams was now in his element. He wrote practically all the public documents from this time until he went as a delegate to the First Continental Congress. Almost at once, upon assuming his new office, he drew up the first *Circular Letter*, so called because a copy of the letter was sent to each of the other colonies so that they might be informed of the action of Massachusetts. The letter protested against the taxes imposed by the *Declaratory Act*, and protested in stronger terms than ever against the power of Parliament over the colonies.

Samuel Adams's daughter tells the story that as her father sat writing this letter, one copy of which was to be sent to the King, she said in girlish awe of the far-off ruler, "Isn't it wonderful, that paper will soon be touched by the royal hand!"

To which Samuel Adams replied, "It will, my dear, more likely be spurned by the royal foot."

And so it was; for, though some of the taxes were removed, the tax on tea was left in order to show the colonies that Parliament had the power to tax if they wished to use it.

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## THE BOSTON MASSACRE

WHILE the controversy on taxes was going on, another cause of serious discontent appeared in the arrival of armed forces to help the Governor in compelling obedience to the acts of Parliament. The immediate cause of sending the troops to Boston was the *Circular Letter*, which was such an open avowal of the determination of Massachusetts not to obey Parliament that it could not be overlooked.

First came a warship, then two regiments of soldiers, who were quartered at the expense of the town in Faneuil Hall and on the Common. There was little open demonstration against the troops at first; but everyone resented the presence of the troops, and particularly the feeling that force was being used to bring the town to terms. The red-coats, quartered in the center of the city, did more to bring the people of Boston to the point of open opposition to England than years of argument. And Samuel Adams now found them ready to go fully as far as he might desire in any political move looking toward freedom from a rule that was proving more and more unbearable.

With the united support of the rest of the colony, Adams fought against the Governor in his demands for an appropriation to defray the expenses of the troops. Adams led the fight in the Assembly and wrote the letter to the Governor in which money for the troops was refused. The letter was more than a refusal; it was also a demand for the immediate removal of the troops.

The demand was without avail, however, and the troops stayed on. Governor Bernard was recalled to England, and Thomas Hutchinson was put in his place. By the spring of 1770 the soldiers had been for seventeen months in Boston. They had not been used except as a threat; but the first fear and awe which they may have inspired had worn off. Almost daily there had been small disturbances and fights between the soldiers and the townspeople. In the winter, for instance, the soldiers had ruined the boys' coasting on the Common by sprinkling ashes on the packed snow. Feeling ran higher and higher until on the fifth of March an argument between a sentinel and a crowd of boys grew into a riot. The sentinel called out the guard to assist him, and the soldiers fired into the crowd, killing three and wounding eight.

The town leaped to action, not as we might suppose to a fight with the soldiers, but (how characteristic) to a great town meeting. A committee, including Adams and Hancock, was appointed to

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wait upon the Governor and demand the removal of the soldiers to Castle William, just outside the city. The Governor refused, but said that he might remove the one regiment that had done the shooting. The committee, however, demanded that both regiments should be withdrawn; and when the Governor continued to refuse the demand, the committee returned to the town meeting for further instructions.

The citizens were packed in front of the Old State House to hear the outcome of the conference with the Governor. As the committee came down the steps, the people in the street raised the cry, "Make way for the committee."

Adams walked slowly through the crowd, bowing first to the right, then to the left, repeating in a clear voice to every one he passed, "Both regiments or none!" "Both regiments or none!"

As soon as the town meeting heard the reply of the Governor, everyone present took up the cry. There was hardly need for putting the question to vote, the demand for removal of both regiments was unanimous. With the backing of a united town meeting, the committee once more went to the Governor. John Hancock was the chairman of the committee, and Samuel Adams was the spokesman. He faced the Governor and spoke as follows:

"If you have the power to remove one regiment you have the power to remove both; and nothing short of their total removal will satisfy the people or preserve the peace of the Province. A multitude highly incensed now wait the result of this application. The voice of ten thousand freemen demands that both regiments be forthwith removed. Their voice must be respected, their demand obeyed. Fail not then at your peril to comply with this request."

Never had he spoken to greater advantage. The voice of Samuel Adams was the voice of Boston. The Governor recognized it and gave in. The regiments were removed.

The whole incident was so striking, so dramatic, that it struck the fancy of Hancock, and he determined to have a fitting memorial of that great victory. Accordingly he secured the famous artist, John Singleton Copley, to paint portraits of Adams and himself as they appeared on that March day when they drove the British uniform out of Boston. The picture hangs today in the Boston Art Museum, and it is probably the best representation we have of Samuel Adams.

Because of the great part Samuel Adams played in the removal

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of the troops, the two regiments were always referred to thereafter as "Sam Adams's Regiments."

The power he showed at this crisis was the power that Adams showed at every point in his struggle for American Liberty, the power of a leader with the voice of a united people behind him, a fearless power that did not recognize any authority but that of the people.

The Boston Massacre made the breach between the Mother Country and the colonies even greater than before. The only wonder is that it did not at once cause war. Such a course was fortunately delayed by the action forcing the Governor to remove the troops; but it could only delay the inevitable war of the Revolution.

## THE BOSTON TEA PARTY

**D**URING the three years from 1770, the date of the Massacre, to 1773, the date of the Boston Tea Party, the legislative fight continued with ever-increasing bitterness. The British Parliament refused to remove the tax on tea, and demanded full obedience on the part of the colonies to all acts of Parliament, and to the demands of the Royal Governor. The colonies petitioned and requested in vain. In all this fight of words Samuel Adams had always a leading part. He wrote petitions and, by means of newspaper articles, moulded public opinion. Most important of his services during this period was the establishment of "A Committee of Correspondence," whose duty it was to keep always in touch with the rest of the thirteen colonies, who formed similar committees. It was a first step to union, and a step which led very logically to the final united action of all the colonies.

The first meeting of this committee was in 1772, at which time a careful statement of the purpose of such correspondence between the colonies was made. The other colonies at once fell in line with the action of Massachusetts, whose leadership was unquestioned in this as in most of the steps which led to the Revolution.

The colonies and Parliament stood firmly against each other on the matter of taxation in spite of all the efforts to come to an understanding. The tax on tea remained in force to show the colonies that they were under the rule of Parliament, while the colonies refused to import or buy tea. In 1773 three ships loaded with tea were brought into Boston harbor. The tea was to be forced on the colonists. A town meeting convened at once, there was great



excitement, the citizens of nearby towns were invited. Samuel Adams rose and moved that the meeting should do "The utmost in their power to prevent the landing of the tea." And further, "Is it the firm resolve of this body that the tea should not only be sent back, but that no duty shall be paid thereon?" When put to a vote Adams's motion carried without a dissenting vote. The ships' captains were forbidden to land the tea at their peril. A writer of the times says, "Adams was never in greater glory."

The Governor, of course, refused to let the ships go back, and thus things stood at a deadlock for several weeks. They dared not land the tea; they could not take it back.

The town sent several times to the Governor demanding that the ships be returned. Finally on the 16th of December the crisis came. Town meeting after town meeting had been held, while the excitement had grown to fever heat. Seven thousand people tried to swarm into Old South Meeting House. Samuel Adams was elected Moderator. A final demand was sent to the Governor that the ships be sent back. Just as darkness fell the committee returned from the Governor with his final refusal to return the ships.

Samuel Adams arose in his place. The citizens leaned forward to hear his words, as Adams exclaimed in a voice that could be heard even in the streets, "This meeting can do nothing more to save the country."

His words were a signal; for at once the war-whoop was heard, and half a hundred "Mohawks" rushed to the door. With the crowd behind them, the "Indians" rushed to Griffin's Wharf, where the tea ships were tied, and dumped three hundred and forty-two chests of tea into the water.

Parliament retaliated as soon as news of the *Tea Party* arrived in London by means of the Port Bill. Boston harbor was closed until Massachusetts should pay for the tea destroyed and admit the right of Parliament to collect the tax. Furthermore, the right of the free town meeting was taken away; hereafter the Governor alone could call a town meeting, and only such things as he prescribed could be discussed.

Such action, of course, made the people of Massachusetts only the more angry, and the more determined not to pay the hateful tax. The Committee of Correspondence sent news of the new oppression to all the colonies, who sent at once expressions of sympathy and promises of help. Pennsylvania recommended a continental congress with delegates from all the colonies, to consider some united action against Parliament. Massachusetts welcomed

such a move; for it had been one of Adams's chief desires that the colonies should unite. His Committee of Correspondence had laid the foundation for a stronger and better union in the proposed congress.

## CONTINENTAL CONGRESS

THE Congress was called to meet in Philadelphia in September, 1774. Massachusetts had elected Samuel and John Adams, Thomas Cushing, and Robert Treat Paine as its representatives. In approaching his new duties, Samuel Adams found how many true friends he had made in his life of service for the Commonwealth. He was a poor man, having taken no thought of himself; and he could hardly afford the necessary clothes, horses, carriage, and equipment which a trip to Philadelphia demanded. His friends banded together and procured for him new clothes, shoes, a wig, and sufficient money for the journey.

The journey was a triumphant march. The cities through which the delegates passed turned out to welcome them and to speed them on their way.

Arrived at the Congress, Adams found that some distrust had arisen among the delegates of the other colonies towards Massachusetts. They feared that Adams and his followers were trying to control all the colonies. Tact was necessary on the part of Adams. He kept in the background and by his actions gradually dispelled the fears of the other colonies.

The Congress accomplished little in forwarding the cause of freedom, except that it brought the colonies together in a united front; and swept away many barriers which led more easily to the steps taken in the next Congress which was called for May 20, 1775.

## WAR BEGINS

BETWEEN the first and second Congress Adams was in Boston, where the people were fully awake to the likelihood of war. The Province was now under a new Governor, General Gage, who was a soldier and who had brought with him soldiers enough to enforce the will of Parliament. The colonists on their side had formed a Committee of Safety, had begun to collect arms and munitions, and had formed themselves into military companies for the sake of



fighting in case of any sign of open hostilities. These citizen soldiers were called *Minute Men*.

Samuel Adams and John Hancock had for some time been marked by the King as traitors for their part in the resistance of Parliament. Both were leaders, and the King was informed by his officers that the trouble in the colonies would soon end if these two men were arrested and sent to England for trial as traitors.

On the night of the 18th of April, 1775, Adams and Hancock were in Lexington, from where they were to proceed to the Second Continental Congress. Governor Gage learned of their whereabouts and sent out troops to capture them, and to seize the munitions which the Committee of Safety had stored in Concord. Word of the coming of the redcoats was spread by Paul Revere, who stopped to shout the warning at the house where Hancock and Adams were staying. A guard of *Minute Men* was on duty at the house, one of whom cautioned Revere not to make so much noise.

"Noise," cried Paul Revere, "you'll have noise enough before long. The regulars are coming."

Adams and Hancock escaped before the redcoats came, and thus missed the first battle of the Revolution, which was fought the next day between the hastily summoned *Minute Men* and the British at Concord and Lexington.

But even the first bloodshed of the war, and the open hostilities which followed in Boston, did not at once bring the Second Continental Congress to an understanding of what had happened. There was no immediate demand for independence, which Samuel Adams knew must be the only solution.

## THE DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE

THE Congress met in May, 1775, and elected John Hancock as its President. Samuel Adams had won a great victory in securing the election of Hancock, because it tended to decrease the distrust of Massachusetts, which was still alive. By another move the Massachusetts delegation created still stronger bonds between the colonies. John Adams nominated George Washington of Virginia as the Commander-in-Chief of the army, which was at that time in Massachusetts and made up almost totally of Massachusetts *Minute Men*. This army was adopted by the Congress as the colonial army.

Even with that move, however, the hope of independence was not realized. The colonies still believed that peace with the mother

country was possible. So that the Second Congress adjourned without declaring for independence from England.

The Third Continental Congress met, with Hancock again President, and Adams again the chief champion of the cause of independence. The war had gone on, England had refused any concessions, troops had been recruited, and still the colonies seemed not ready to cut the bond which held them to England. In all of Samuel Adams's letters and writings of this period we see his desire for independence grow into hope as gradually he won to his side Jefferson, John Adams, Franklin, and others who had held back. Finally on the 8th of June, 1776, a resolution for independence from England, called the *Lee Resolution*, was presented to the Congress.

Indecision, fear, doubt, and actual opposition developed in the debate which followed. Samuel Adams arose in defense of the Resolution and, in the words of Elbridge Gerry, who witnessed the scene, "The success of the Lee measure was largely due to his (Adams's) timely remarks." The speech he gave on that occasion was his ablest effort; for ten years he had watched and worked for the moment when he should be able to see America a free and independent country.

The Lee resolve did not come to a vote. It was delayed for three weeks and a committee appointed to draw up a declaration. Thomas Jefferson was chairman of the committee. In the three weeks' period that followed, Samuel Adams worked with every member who still retained doubts, so that on the fourth day of July, 1776, when the *Declaration of Independence* from England was adopted, there was not a dissenting voice. And the delegates, beginning with John Hancock, placed their names on the document which made of the colonies a new nation. For Samuel Adams that was the most triumphant moment of his life.

Although Samuel Adams lived for a quarter of a century longer, he had finished his greatest work—the work of securing American Independence—on the fourth day of July, 1776. And it is as the Father of American Independence that he is now known and revered. Because of his vision, his steadfast purpose, his unceasing labor during the ten years preceding the Revolution, the colonies were able to unite and secure their freedom from England.

During the Revolutionary War, Adams remained in Congress, where he did much valuable work, serving on the committee which drew up the Articles of Confederation. At the close of the war he returned to Boston, and was almost immediately elected to the State Senate, where he was made the presiding officer.



## LAST DAYS

IN 1789, Adams was elected Lieutenant Governor of Massachusetts, in which office he was again serving shoulder to shoulder with John Hancock, who was Governor. It was a combination of which Massachusetts might justly be proud, for together these two had gone through those early days of struggle, and together they had been marked by the King of England as the chief rebels in America.

By the death of Hancock in 1793, Adams became Governor of the Commonwealth; and that position he held until 1797, when he withdrew from public life after forty-four years of unbroken service for his country. He lived quietly in his home on Winter Street, seeing old friends, going occasionally to the town meetings, but keeping entirely out of politics.

When Jefferson became President, in 1800, he wrote to Adams: "It would have been a day of glory which should have called you to the first office of my administration. But give us your counsel, my friend, and give us your blessing, and be assured that there exists not in the heart of man a more faithful esteem than mine to you and that I shall ever bear you the most affectionate veneration and respect."

On October 2, 1803, Samuel Adams breathed his last; and Boston mourned the death of one of her greatest sons as he was laid to rest in the Granary Burying Ground. The town he loved, served, and led has erected to his memory a statue of bronze which stands today in front of Faneuil Hall, and is an endearing tribute to the man of the town meeting, the leader in the legislative struggle for freedom, the Father of American Independence.



On the night of "Paul Revere's Ride," the patriots. Samuel Adams and John Hancock—were in hiding from the British in a house in Lexington.